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OTRACO OPERATIONS IN THE BELGIAN CONGO

OTRACO REPORT ON 1951 TRAFFIC -- Leopoldville, Le Courrier d'Afrique, 27 Oct 52

A recent report by OTRACO (Office d'Exploitation des Transports Coloniaux, Office of Colonial Transport Operations), covering operations for 1951, showed a considerable increase in its import traffic. The following table compares import and export traffic during 1950 and 1951 at the port of Matadi, over the Matadi-Leopoldville Railroad, and on the inland waterways. Figures are given in percentages, using 1946 as 100 percent.

	Imports		Exports	
	1950	1951	1950	1951
Port of Matadi	112	179	29	39
Matadi-Leopoldville RR	111	168	39	47
Inland waterways	135	171	84	104

During 1951, the payload handled by the various branches of OTRACO and at the port of Matadi was as follows (in tons):

Inland waterways -- Inbound, 442,070; outbound, 562,227.

Matadi-Leopoldville Railroad -- Inbound, 600,780; outbound, 517,750; local traffic, 663,155.

Mayumbe Railroad -- Inbound, 29,448; outbound, 127,520.

Kivu Railroad -- Inbound, 35,072; outbound, 9,922.

Port of Matadi -- Inbound, 566,636; outbound, 557,774.

Lake Kivu -- Eastbound, 16,921; westbound, 46,565.

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OTRACO PURCHASES MODERN FIRE ENGINE -- Leopoldville, Le Courrier d'Afrique, 21 Sep 52

OTRACO recently purchased a fire engine for its Leopoldville installations which is the most modern of its kind in the Belgian Congo.

Designed and built by the Etablissements Wasterlain (Wasterlain Enterprises) of Brussels, the new fire engine combines power with mobility. It has a Ford F7 chassis, a 145-horsepower motor, dual rear tires with deep thread, and a five-speed gear box, the fifth gear of which is direct drive.

The motor drives a powerful three-stage centrifugal pump which can be coupled to any stage in parallel or in series to permit variable pressures. The high-pressure stage (third stage) produces a pressure of 60-70 kilograms per square centimeter. By means of fog nozzles, the water emerges in the form of drops no more than 1.100 millimeters in diameter.

Because of the small quantity of water required for effective fog coverage, a 2,000-liter booster tank was installed in the fire engine which permits immediate fire attack for a period of 20 minutes. If more water is required, connections are made with local water hookups. The fire engine is also supplied with foam fire-fighting equipment.

OTRACO PURCHASES NEW ROLLING STOCK -- Leopoldville, Le Courrier d'Afrique, 24 Jul 53

OTRACO recently placed an order with the Ateliers de Famillereux (Famillereux Shops) for 400 thirty-ton boxcars and 100 ballast cars with a 400-ton capacity.

In May 1952, an order for 500 flat cars with removable side planks was placed with the Brugeoise, Nicaise, and Delcuve Company. In June 1952, an order for two freight cars was placed with the Forges, Usines, Fonderies de Haine-St. Pierre (Haine-St. Pierre Forges, Shops, and Foundries). This makes a total of more than 1,000 cars ordered in the first half of 1952.

Of the 575 freight cars ordered by OTRACO in Belgium in 1951, at least 100 units are yet to be delivered.

During the period from 1945 to 1951, OTRACO's inventory of railroad cars increased from 1,528 to 2,253. Thus far in 1952, OTRACO has placed orders in Belgium for 27 locomotives with the following firms:

Baume et Marpent -- Eight 1,400-horsepower diesel-electric units; four 43-ton diesel-electric units.

Energie (Power Company) -- Three steam locomotives.

Cockerill Company -- Eight 1,600-horsepower diesel-electric locomotives.

Atelier Metallurgiques de Tubize (Tubize Metallurgical Shops) -- Four 50-ton diesel-hydraulic units.

OTRACO GETS NEW TUGBOAT -- Leopoldville, Le Courrier d'Afrique, 11 Jul 53

A new 1,000-horsepower tugboat, the Kiri, was recently acquired by OTRACO. Having successfully completed its first tests, it is scheduled to enter regular service on the Congo River within a week.

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The other three 1,000-horsepower tugboats already in service are the Kisangani, the Kwamouht, and the Kuzulu. Two additional tugboats, the Kimpoko and the Kilwit, are now being fitted out and will be put in service shortly. Sometime in the future, two more tugs, the Kisantu and the Katu, will also be put in service. Five additional units of the same type, the K series, are in the planning stage.

The characteristics of the K series are as follows: length, 65 meters; beam, 10.5 meters; draft, 1.20 meters under way; and propulsion, three 345-horsepower Carels engines turning at 350 revolutions per minute.

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